UNIVERSITY OF TORONTO
FACULTY OF MUSIC

"A Celebration of Black History through Music" featuring University of Toronto Faculty of Music Gospel Choir

Dr. Darren Hamilton, *conductor and event curator*

Saturday, February 8, 2025 at 7:30 pm | Lyric Theatre - Meridian Arts Centre, 5040 Yonge St.

PROGRAM

SET 1

Ain't Gonna Let Nobody Turn Me Around

African American Spiritual
Recorded by The Freedom Singers
Sinead Sullivan-Paul, Alyssa Rosolowski,
Nathalie Winfield-Hicks, Ainsley deBoer, *soloists*

Goin' Up Yonder

Composed by Walter Hawkins
Recorded by Walter Hawkins and the Love Center Choir
Fraser Elsdon, Ana Garcia Flores, Alynia Allan, *soloists*

Swing Low, Sweet Chariot

Composed by Wallace Willis
Recorded by The Fisk Jubilee Singers
Nathalie Winfield-Hicks, Amanda Won, Charlotte Fowler, *soloists*

Chariot

Composed by Eleanor Adella Wright
Recorded by Sharon Riley and Faith Chorale
Sharon Riley, *guest soloist*

Lift Every Voice and Sing–Canadian Premiere

Composed by James Weldon Johnson and John Rosamond Johnson
Arrangement by Brandon Felder
Featuring Kwasi Dunyo and students from the
West African Drumming and Dance Ensemble

We wish to acknowledge this land on which the University of Toronto operates. For thousands of years, it has been the traditional land of the Huron-Wendat, the Seneca, and the Mississaugas of the Credit. Today, this meeting place is still the home to many Indigenous people from across Turtle Island and we are grateful to have the opportunity to work on this land.

As part of the Faculty's commitment to improving Indigenous inclusion, we call upon all members of our community to start/continue their personal journeys towards understanding and acknowledging Indigenous peoples' histories, truths and cultures. Visit indigenous.utoronto.ca to learn more.

Faith

Composed by Kirk Franklin and Allen Toussaint
Recorded by God's Property
Julian Przybyslawski, Alyssa Rosolowski, *soloists*

West African Drumming and Dance Ensemble
Kwasi Dunyo, *director*

The word "MUSIC" in Africa means three things: drumming, dancing and singing; performed together–no separation!
Zigi: A social or recreational dance from the Volta Region of Ghana.
Kpanlogo: A social or recreational dance originated from the Ga people of Ghana.
They live in and around the capital Accra.

INTERMISSION–15 MINUTES

SET 2

Giving You My Problems To Work Out

Composed by Eric McDaniel
Recorded by Hezekiah Walker and the Love Fellowship Crusade Choir
Amanda Won, Erin Yip, Kimberly Brathwaite, *soloists*

God Is On Our Side

Composed by Andrae Crouch and Luther "Mano" Hanes
Recorded by Andrae Crouch

Lily In The Valley

Composed by John P. Kee
Recorded by John P. Kee and the VIP Mass Choir
Kimberly Brathwaite, Ainsley deBoer, *soloists*

God Is With Me

Composed by Fred Hammond and David Ivey
Recorded by Sharon Riley and Faith Chorale
Sharon Riley, *guest soloist*

Do You See Them?–World Premiere

Composed by Aaron Manswell and Darren Hamilton

Great Expectation

Composed by Jules Bartholomew
Recorded by J.J. Hairston and Youthful Praise
Fraser Elsdon, Amanda Won, Erin Yip, Ainsley deBoer, *soloists*

UNIVERSITY OF TORONTO FACULTY OF MUSIC GOSPEL CHOIR
Dr. Darren Hamilton, *conductor*
Desaraé Dee, *professional gospel accompanist*
Grace MacCaskill, *teaching assistant*

Sopranos	**Altos**	**Tenors**	**Bariton/Basses**
Alynia Allan	Ainsley deBoer	Alyssa Rosolowski	Fraser Elsdon
Amanda Won	Erin Yip	Emmalin Pan	Julian Przybyslawski
Ana Garcia Flores	Kimberly Brathwaite	Eve Channel	Jordan Cheng
Charlotte Fowler	Nathalie Winfield-Hicks	Victor Huang	
Rowena Hetherington-Wilson	Trinity Thai		
Sinead Sullivan-Paul	Viviana Chan		

Concert Rhythm Section
Desaraé Dee, *musical director, lead keys*
Rachel Smith, *auxiliary keys*
Ronjay Clarke, *electric bass guitar*
Sashane Brearcliffe-Clarke, *drums*

Aaron Manswell, *lead keys* on “Do You See Them?”

UNIVERSITY OF TORONTO WEST AFRICAN DRUMMING AND DANCE ENSEMBLE
Kwasi Dunyo, *director*

Will Bentley	Joe Goldwin Hanson	Rhea Siddhantakar	Zai Wang
Kimberley Brathwaite	Adrian Malandrino	Harry Sun	Fiona Xiao
Yuling Chen	Dan Millet	Adam Wang	Emily Zhang
Josh Gibson	Jorge Salas Narvaez	Katie Wang	Xinya Zhang
Jia Huan Guo			

SOCIAL MEDIA

Please tag our accounts on your social media posts (i.e., photos, videos, etc.) from this event:

University of Toronto Faculty of Music Gospel Choir - Facebook Page

@uoftfacultyofmusicgospelchoir - Instagram Handle

University of Toronto Faculty of Music - Facebook Page

@uoftmusic - Instagram Handle

DONATION INFORMATION

Thank you to our generous community for making possible enriching experiences and opportunities for Music students. Make a gift today in support of Gospel Music studies at U of T!

Please scan the QR code or visit

uoft.me/gospel-2025

to make a tax-receiptable gift in support of Gospel Music studies at the Faculty of Music.

PERFORMER BIOGRAPHIES

The University of Toronto Faculty of Music Gospel Choir was founded in 2019 by Dr. Darren Hamilton. It is a credit course offering, currently open to students in the Faculty of Music and the Toronto School of Theology at the University of Toronto. The ensemble explores and performs various forms of gospel music repertoire, ranging from African American spirituals to mainstream contemporary gospel music. Since its inception, the choir has performed for many Faculty of Music and Toronto School of Theology events. In 2024, the choir hosted and headlined its inaugural "A Celebration of Black History through Music" event and was featured in a documentary by award-winning producer, Alisa Siegel, that aired on three CBC radio programs, *IDEAS, The Current with Matt Galloway,* and *Storylines*. The choir also performed at the 2024 Toronto Jazz Festival's "Gospel in the Grove" event. The choir has shared the stage with JUNO-nominated gospel recording artist, Patricia Shirley, has worked with award-winning Canadian instrumental fusion artist, composer and producer, Desarae Dee, and is excited to share the stage with JUNO Award-winning gospel recording artist, Sharon Riley at this year's "A Celebration of Black History through Music" event.

Dr. Darren Hamilton is an assistant professor of music education and the founding director of the University of Toronto Faculty of Music Gospel Choir. His research interests lie in formal gospel music, popular music and hip hop music education, in addition to anti-Black racism, equity, diversity and social justice in music education. He has served as a member of the JUNO Award-winning Toronto Mass Choir (TMC) and the JUNO-nominated Youth Outreach Mass Choir. He has also guest conducted performances for TMC, the Oakville Chora, the Tyndale Community Choir, and the University of Toronto Chamber Choir. Dr. Darren Hamilton was the recipient of the 2022 JUNO Award for MusiCounts Teacher of the Year, recognising his commitment to equity and diversity, as well as his professional contributions to the field of music education. His original gospel composition, "Do You See Them?", co-composed with Aaron Manswell, will receive its world premiere performance by the University of Toronto Faculty of Music Gospel Choir at "A Celebration of Black History through Music".

Sharon Riley is a JUNO and Harry Jerome Award winner who has led Sharon Riley & Faith Chorale (SRFC) for over 30 years, establishing them as Canada's premier gospel group. SRFC has performed at the JUNO Awards and MMVAs, sharing the stage with Kirk Franklin, The Clark Sisters, Fred Hammond, Michael Bublé, and Mariah Carey. They are the first Canadian gospel group to sign an international recording contract. Sharon's journey of perseverance, resilience, and faith continues to inspire, uplifting audiences with dynamic performances and unwavering messages of hope.

The University of Toronto West African Drumming and Dance Ensemble has been running under the direction of Kwasi Dunyo since 1998. This curricular ensemble introduces students to the excitement and joy of West African drumming and dance. Students learn and perform traditional instruments, techniques, and practices, and are introduced to the broader social context of music and dance in West African society.

Frederick Kwasi Dunyo, commonly known as **Kwasi Dunyo**, was born in the Ewe village of Dagbamete, Volta Region of Ghana, West Africa. He has been drumming from the time he was a small boy, standing on blocks to reach the top of the drums. Since that time, he has drummed, danced, taught and directed extensively in a variety of contexts both in Ghana, USA, Canada, Bermuda and Taiwan. As a master Ewe drummer and teacher, Kwasi brings over 20 years of teaching experience from across North America and a lifetime of music-making to his students. He has been teaching West African drumming and dance as a member on the faculties of music at University of Toronto since 1998, and at York University since 2023.

Aaron Manswell is a composer of soulful Classical, R&B, Gospel and Hip-Hop music. A native of Toronto, his songs have been performed and recorded across North America. He has collaborated with the Canadian Opera Company and the Toronto Mendelssohn Choir, for whom he is the Composer-in-Residence. His music is featured on Billboard Traditional Classical Albums Chart-topper Tapestry of Becoming by Choral Arts Initiative and is completing a Doctor of Musical Arts in Composition at the University of Toronto. Aaron Manwell's original gospel composition, “Do You See Them?”, co-composed with Dr. Darren Hamilton, will receive its world premiere performance by the University of Toronto Faculty of Music Gospel Choir at this year’s “A Celebration of Black History through Music”.

Brandon Felder is a multifaceted and passionate musician, producer, composer and educator. Felder was appointed assistant professor of music at Bowie State University in 2022 and serves as the Director of Choral Activities. Professor Felder is the director of the Bowie State University Concert Choir and also provides additional collaborative efforts within the Fine and Performing Arts Department at Bowie State. Felder’s accolades include producing award-winning distinctions for his programs ranging from NAMM Music Merit Awards (2017-2024), Billboard Music Charts (2017), GRAMMY® Recording Academy Signature Schools (2015-2017), as well as Maryland Arts and Humanities and Arts Education Grants/Awards (2020-2024). Felder’s arrangement of “Lift Every Voice and Sing” will receive its Canadian premiere performance by the University of Toronto Faculty of Music Gospel Choir at “A Celebration of Black History through Music”.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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Live Stream Technicians: Kevin Li and Jerry Wang